



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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## 31 gypsy moths trapped in Washington during 2005 summer trapping

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) announced today that 31 gypsy moths were caught at 15 sites this summer during WSDA's annual hunt for the pest insect. The results followed removal and analysis of 24,000 small cardboard traps from the field.

Five of the 15 sites are multiple-catch sites: Crown Hill in Seattle (eight moths), Madrona Park in Seattle (five moths), Kent (four moths), and two moths each at sites in east Bellevue and downtown Bellevue. Physical inspections of the five sites are now being conducted for additional evidence of gypsy moth activity, particularly egg masses and pupal cases.

The 31 catches compare with 68 catches at 24 sites in 2004, and 59 catches at 17 sites in 2003.

At this point no treatments for next spring have been planned.

Last spring WSDA conducted treatments in the Eastlake neighborhood of Seattle and near Keyport in rural Kitsap County. Eighty-two treatments have been conducted in Washington since the first one in 1979 and no permanent populations have ever been detected in the Evergreen State.

The destructive gypsy moth is one of America's worst forest pests. It attacks more than 500 species of deciduous and evergreen trees, has defoliated millions of U.S. trees, and spreads relentlessly once established.

Spring 2004 treatments for gypsy moth in Port Ludlow and Bellevue have been declared "successful" by WSDA entomologists since none of the moths caught in the summers of 2004 and 2005 were detected at the two sites. To qualify as a successful eradication, protocol calls for zero moth catches at a site for two consecutive summers.

The number of moths caught yearly varies widely, ranging from a high of 1,315 in 1983, to a low of 17 in 2002. Gypsy moths normally arrive in Washington each year in the form of egg masses attached to outdoor articles, such as picnic tables, birdhouses, and children's toys brought here from infested states, primarily from the East Coast and upper Midwest. Some moths arrive on foreign ships docked at Washington ports.

Persons with questions on WSDA's gypsy moth program may call the department's toll-free hotline (1-800-443-6684) or visit the agency's Web site at [www.agr.wa.gov](http://www.agr.wa.gov).

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